

Harpswell Bulletin

NEWS FOR HARPSWELL RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS FROM THE TOWN OFFICE - AUGUST 2015
TOWN WEBSITE: WWW.HARPSWELL.MAINE.GOV

Property Tax Information

2015 TAX RATE

The Selectmen/Assessors set the 2015 tax rate, or mil rate, at \$6.24 for every \$1,000 of assessed value. This is an increase of 2.3% in the tax rate compared to the prior year amounting to \$14 more in property tax for every \$100,000 of assessed value. The increase in the tax rate results from a 5.4% increase in the school assessment by SAD #75 (up \$391,338), a 6.1% increase in the Cumberland County assessment (up \$72,117) and a 1.9% increase in municipal appropriations (up \$82,601).

HOW TO PAY YOUR PROPERTY TAX BILL

There are several methods available for paying your property tax bill:

1) stop by and pay in person with currency or a check, or send your check in the mail; 2) credit or debit cards—in person only, with a 2.5% fee assessed for each transaction; and 3) a web-based payment service called AndroPay available through the Town's home page by clicking the online services tab—a \$1 fee will be assessed for each transaction. The first installment of the 2015 tax bill is due on Tuesday, September 15 with the second installment being due on Tuesday, December 15. A 6% annual interest rate will be charged on the unpaid portion of any installment after its due date.

HARPSWELL'S PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Voters at the Annual Town Meeting amended the Town's Property Tax Assistance Ordinance which re-establishes a program to provide property tax assistance to qualifying persons who reside in Harpswell. Under this program, the Town will provide supplemental cash refund payments to those individuals who qualify as beneficiaries of the State of Maine Residents Property Tax Fairness Credit. Residents must file Form PTFC with Maine Revenue Services. In addition, residents must also submit an application to the Town's program by October 15 of each year. The Property Tax Fairness Credit replaces the State of Maine's former program, known as the Circuit Breaker Program. Please contact Deputy Town Administrator Terri Sawyer at 833-5771 or tsawyer@town.harpswell.me.us if you have questions about this program.

Harpswell Bandstand by the Sea Concert Program



Located at Mitchell Field
Route 123, Harpswell

2015 Thursday Concerts (remaining dates)

Thursday 6 - 8 pm

August 13	<i>Tom Porter Quartet</i>
August 20	<i>Harpswell Concert Band</i>
August 27	<i>Jim Chard and the Windy Ridge Boys</i>

2015 September Concerts Sunday 2 - 4 pm

September 6	<i>Pretty Girls Sing Soprano</i>
September 13	<i>Denny Breau Trio</i>
September 20	<i>Jimmy Jo and the Jumbol'Ayuh</i>
September 27	<i>Harpswell Concert Band</i>

Harpswell Guide to Outdoor Recreation



View from the Giant's Stairs Trail (Ed Robinson photo)

Harpswell Guide to Outdoor Recreation

There are many great hikes and scenic vistas in Harpswell. For detailed information and maps, check out the latest edition of the *Harpswell Guide to Outdoor Recreation* which highlights outdoor activities across the Town. Copies of the *Guide* are available on our website, at the Town Office and other locations around Harpswell.

One of the most popular trails is the Town's Cliff Trail. Thanks to members of the Recreation Committee, there is a new sign at the Town Office which gives more visibility to where this trail begins.

The *Guide* also contains information about the numerous trails and properties maintained by the Harpswell Heritage Land Trust, including its most recent addition—Curtis Cove Farm Preserve on Harpswell Neck. Many islands with public access are highlighted as well in the *Guide*, including Eagle Island, which now bears the distinction of having been designated a National Historic Landmark. Enjoy being in the great outdoors and taking in all the incredible sights Harpswell has to offer.

Public Transportation

In partnership with Coastal Trans, the Town of Harpswell launched a public transportation service that operates every Wednesday. There are two alternating routes: (1) the Cundy's Harbor Express which connects riders between Cook's Corner and Cundy's Harbor three times a day; and (2) the Harpswell Connector which stops on Harpswell Neck, Orr's Island and Great Island and then proceeds to Cook's Corner and back several times a day. Connecting with the Brunswick Explorer enables Harpswell riders to access all locations serviced by the Brunswick routes. The schedule is available at harpswell.maine.gov. To sustain a public transportation route, ridership will need to grow. Consider riding the bus with a friend, or offer to take a neighbor who needs transportation to and from the bus stop. There is currently no charge for riding the bus in Harpswell.

Harpswell at Home Initiative

Harpswell at Home is a group of Harpswell residents working in partnership with the Town of Harpswell and local organizations to assess and address the needs of older adults in our community. The group is developing a survey that will be widely distributed around Town and available on the Town's website. The survey is a start of what will be a larger community conversation about what is it like to age here. Survey results will help focus discussions that the group will host around Harpswell. After the community conversations, the group will publish its findings and recommendations.

Keeping Up in the Electronic Age

• VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT HARPSWELL.MAINE.GOV

The Town is updating its website with a focus on Town government and with an eye toward attracting visitors to the community. We are making a special effort to promote public access points, create a more visible link to the business community and highlight available services. We encourage you to visit the Town's website and provide us with feedback under the "Tell Us What You Think" tab.

• LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

386 people have liked the Town of Harpswell's Facebook page since its launch. To like us on Facebook, please go to our home page at harpswell.maine.gov and click on the Facebook symbol. Facebook is viewed as an additional tool for communicating with the public and reaching people who are interested in getting information through a social media source. We post an assortment of information about what is going on in Town government and strive to keep the page fresh and interesting. The Town's Recreation Department also has a link to its Facebook page that is liked currently by 358 people. Parents report that this is a great way to make contact with the Recreation Director and stay informed about what is happening on the recreational front.

• SIGN UP TO BECOME A SUBSCRIBER

Become a subscriber if you would like to get updated emails from the Town about notices, announcements, meetings, etc. At harpswell.maine.gov click on the "Subscribe to Town Information" tab on the left-hand side of the page. Submit your name and email address and you will receive Selectmen's agendas, announcements, and minutes as well as the Harpswell Bulletin and updated Town calendars the day they are posted on the website.